

Message Text

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ACTION INR-10

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 NEA-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 RSC-01

FEA-02 TRSE-00 EB-11 DRC-01 /053 W

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R 131154Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO AMEMBASSY QUITO

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 5347

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 1220

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINAR, EC, IR

SUBJ: MANOUCHEHR FARMANFARMAIAN, NEW IRANIAN AMBASSADOR TO
ECUADOR

REF: QUITO 0799

1. EMBASSY HAS NO BIOGRAPHIC DATA ON FARMANFARMAIAN SUPPLEMENTARY TO THAT SUBMITTED IN TEHRAN A-246 OF SEPTEMBER 5, 1972 FOR WHICH QUITO WAS NOT ADDRESSEE. SUBSTANCE OF BIO DATA REDUCED TO TELEGRAPHESSE FOLLOWS.

2. REGARDED AS OIL SPECIALIST WHO, UNTIL HIS ASSIGNMENT AS AMBASSADOR TO VENEZUELA, HAD HAD NO FOREIGN AFFAIRS EXPERIENCE. AMBASSADOR FARMANFARMAIAN IS AFFABLE AND PLEASANT, BUSINESSMAN CUM DIPLOMAT. FARMANFARMAIAN WAS ONCE CRITICAL OF US ROLE IN STRENGTHENING THE SHAH'S POSITION THROUGH MILITARY GRANTS AND SALES CLAIMING US HELPED SHAH TO OVERSTEP HIS INTENDED ROLE AS CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCH, THEREBY UNDERMINING DEMOCRACY IN IRAN. SINCE THEN HE APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN CO-OPTED BY IRANIAN SYSTEM AND HAS SPENT TWELVE OF LAST THIRTEEN YEARS IN A SERIES OF COMFORTABLE THOUGH NOT CHALLENGING POSITIONS WITH STATE-OWNED NATIONAL IRANIAN OIL COMPANY (NIOC).

3. FARMANFARMAIAN BORN IN TEHRAN 1915. OBTAINED B.A. IN TEHRAN; THEN STUDIED IN FRANCE AND LATER IN BIRMINGHAM, ENG-
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LAND, WHERE HE OBTAINED CHEMICAL ENGINEERING DEGREE IN 1940.

RETURNED TO IRAN 1942 AND JOINED DEPARTMENT OF PETROLEUM CONCESSIONS OF THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE, WHERE HE EVENTUALLY BECAME DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE DEPARTMENT. FIRST BECAME ASSOCIATED WITH NIOC IN 1954 AS MEMBER OF ITS ACCOUNTING COMMISSION. LATER HE WAS MEMBER OF ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL OF THE NATION'S ONLY OIL REFINERY, FINALLY BECOMING PRESIDENT OF THAT COUNCIL. IN 1959 WAS NAMED PRESIDENT OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL OF THE IRAN-CANADIAN OIL COMPANY AND IN JULY 1960 WAS APPOINTED DIRECTOR OF THE DISTRIBUTION DEPARTMENT AT NIOC. WHILE THERE HE ACQUIRED REPUTATION AS AN ADVISOR SOMEWHAT REMOVED FROM MAINSTREAM OF NIOC THINKING. YET, IN 1968 HE BECAME PRESIDENT OF NIOC ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL. NIOC CONTACTS HAVE COMMENTED TO EMBOFFS THAT FARMANFARMAIAN MIGHT HAVE RISEN HIGHER BUT FOR INCONVENIENT TRAIT OF OUTSPOKEN HONESTY AND LINGERING SUSPICIONS THAT HE RETAINS PRIVATELY THE POLITICAL VIEWS NOTED ABOVE.

4. HIS CAREER GIVEN BIG BOOST BY HIS MEMBERSHIP IN WEALTHY FARMANFARMAIAN FAMILY, ONE OF IRAN'S BEST KNOWN CLANS OF ARISTOCRATS AND BUSINESSMEN. FATHER WAS PRINCE MARRIED TO A DAUGHTER OF ONE OF THE SHAHS OF FORMER QAJAR DYNASTY. THE FAMILY WEALTH WHICH ONCE DERIVED FROM EXTENSIVE LANDHOLDINGS NOW INVESTED IN A VARIETY OF ECONOMIC AREAS TIED TO IRAN'S BURGEONING ECONOMY.

5. MRS. FARMANFARMAIAN, FIRST NAME PETRONELLA, IS BLONDE, SLIM, ATTRACTIVE, DUTCH GIRL FORMERLY A SECRETARY NIOC. SHE, TOO, HAS EXPRESSED DISAPPROVAL OF TOTALITARIAN CHARACTERISTICS OF PRESENT IRANIAN REGIME. AMBASSADOR FARMANFARMAIAN SPEAKS ENGLISH AND FRENCH IN ADDITION TO NATIVE FARSI. HE IS AUTHOR OF SEVERAL WORKS ON PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS.

6. WOULD APPRECIATE ANY ADDITIONAL DATA WHICH EMBASSY CARACAS AND QUITO MAY BE ABLE TO PROVIDE.
HELMS

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